

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 05038 071027Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 NSC-05  
SP-02 SS-15 L-03 IO-14 PA-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SSM-05 TRSE-00 /070 W  
-----023302 071031Z /10

O 070947Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4300  
USIA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
USDEL TAIF IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 5038

USIAC

USIA FOR IOP/M; IPS; IBS; INA; JIDDA OR TAIF PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION - SECRETARY'S MIDEAST VISIT

1. AUGUST 7 DAMASCUS DAILIES GIVE MAJOR ATTENTION  
TO VANCE MISSION. TISHRINE, HOWEVER, WAS ONLY PAPER TO  
DEVOTE BANNER HEADLINE TO SECRETARY'S TRIP.

2. TISHRINE'S BANNER HEADLINE READS: "VANCE'S MISSION  
HITS SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES." NEWS LEAD READS: "ARAB  
INSISTANCE ON COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL AND GUARANTEE OF  
PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RIGHTS, SYRIA'S STAND FREEZE  
WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL; UN WILL NOT BE LEFT OUT OF PEACE  
EFFORTS" HEADLINES LEAD INTO FRONT PAGE ARTICLE BY  
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"POLITICAL EDITOR," WHICH EVALUATES RESULTS OF SECRE-  
TARY'S TALKS TO DATE. ARTICLE STATES: "AFTER HIS  
VISITS TO FOUR ARAB COUNTRIES IT IS POSSIBLE TO SAY THAT  
VANCE IS FACING OBSTACLES WHICH WILL MAKE IT DIF-  
FICULT TO TRANSFORM U.S. VIEWS AND PROPOSALS INTO THE  
BASIS FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A DURABLE AND  
JUST PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES

CONSIDER PRESIDENT ASSAD'S REJECTION OF THE PROPOSED WORKING GROUP TO BE THE PRIMARY OBSTACLE TO VANCE'S MISSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THERE SAME CIRCLES BELIEVE ASSAD'S STAND ON THE WORKING GROUP IDEA HAS KILLED ANY HOPE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS IDEA, WHICH AIMED AT RECONCILING ISRAEL'S OBJECTION TO PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AND SYRIA'S INSISTENCE THAT PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA WAS A RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RIGHTS."

3. ALSO PRIMINENTLY FEATURED ON FRONT PAGES OF ALL DAILIES IS REPORT ON ASSAD'S BRIEFING OF PALESTINIAN LEADERS ON RESULTS OF VANCE VISIT, ALONG WITH STATEMENT BY FATAH DEPUTY COMMANDER SALAH KHALAF (ABU IYAD): "THE POSITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION AND THOSE OF SYRIA ARE IDENTICAL."

4. IN BAATH AMID KHOULI'S EDITORIAL IS CAPTIONED: "BEGINNING OF THE NAIL-BITING STATE." KHOULI ECHOES OTHER EDITORIALS ON SUBJECT OF SYRIA'S INSISTENCE ON BASIC PRINCIPLES, AND WARNS: "THE FORTHCOMING PERIOD IS GOING BE DANGEROUS WITHOUT DOUBT, BOTH POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY. WE ARE GOING INTO THE NAIL-BITING STATE. THIS STAGE WILL TEST OUR RESOLVE AND OUR ABILITY TO HOLD FAST TO OUR POSITION. THIS IS THE STAGE WHERE VARIOUS PRESSURES WILL MOUNT AND ARAB SOLIDARITY WILL PASS UNCLASSIFIED

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THROUGH A VERY SEVERE TEST FROM WHICH IT MUST EMERGE WITH A MINIMUM OF DAMAGE. THIS IS THE STAGE IN WHICH ALL PERIPHERAL DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ARABS WILL BE EXPLOITED."

5. MOHAMMAD ZARROUF WRITING IN THAWRA STATES THAT BASIS OF LASTING PEACE IN MIDEAST CAN BE FOUND IN PRESIDENT ASSAD'S STATEMENTS TO PRESS DURING VANCE VISIT TO DAMASCUS. HE REITERATES: "THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS NOT A GOAL IN ITSELF. ITS IMPORTANCE WOULD BE EQUAL TO ITS ABILITY TO TAKE PRACTICAL STEPS ON THE ROAD TO A JUST PEACE BASED ON WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL ARAB LANDS AND RESTORATION OF THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS. IF THE U.S. WANTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SETTLEMENT OF THE AREA CRISIS IN A SERIOUS AND NEUTRAL WAY, THEN IT IS HER DUTY TO BRING THE NECESSARY PRESSURES AGAINST ISRAEL TO ACCEPT U.N. RESOLUTIONS."  
KEITH

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, VISITS, PEACE PLANS  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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